

James Madison to Thomas Jefferson, March 18, 1782. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900-1910.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.1

Philadelphia, March 18, 1782.

Dear Sir, —I have met with a bundle of old pamphlets belonging to the public library here, in which is a map² published in 1650, which, from this and other

2 Mr. P. Lee Phillips, Superintendent of the Map Department of the Library of Congress, identifies this as the map of Virginia Farrer, published in London in 1650 or 1651. It is described as a curious combination of fact and fiction and an evidence of ignorance in England of the geographical position of Virginia with reference to “the Sea of China and the Indies,” which are placed west of “ould Virginia and new.” The Potomac River at its mouth is called “Maryland River,” and the Carolinas appear as “Rawliana.” Virginia Farrer also wrote a paper on “The Reformed Virginia Silk Worm.” See Phillips's *Virginia Cartography*, *Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections*, 1039.

circumstances, I am pretty confident is of the same impression with that of Dr. Smith's. It represents the South Sea at about ten days' travel from the heads or falls, I forget which, of James River. From the tenor, however, of the pamphlet to which it is immediately annexed, and indeed of the whole collection, there is just ground to suspect that this representation was an artifice to favor the object of the publications, which evidently was to entice emigrants from England by a flattering picture of the advantages of this country, one of which, dwelt on in all the pamphlets, is the vicinity of the South Sea, and the facility

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it afforded of a trade with the Eastern world. Another circumstance, which lessens much the value of this map to the antiquary, is, that it is more modern by twenty-five years than those extant

in Purchase's Pilgrim, which are referred to in the negotiations between the British and French Commissaries touching the bounds of Nova Scotia, as the first of authenticity relating to this part of the world. If, notwithstanding these considerations, you still desire that a copy be taken from the map above described, I shall with pleasure execute your orders; or if you wish that a copy of Virginia, or of the whole country, may be taken from those in Purchase, your orders shall be equally attended to. I much doubt, however, whether that book be so extremely scarce as to require a transcript from it for the purpose you seem to have in view.

Congress have taken no step in the business of the Western territory since the report of the Committee, of which I have already given you an account, and which, we hear, arrived at Richmond on the day of the adjournment of the Assembly. We wish it to undergo their consideration, and to receive their instructions before we again move in it.